

WHO WILL TELL THE TRUTH TO SAVE THE SALMON?

Will it be the Corp of Engineers, with all their millions of dollars of studies. Will it be NMFS, with its hundred fish biologists and no one else that understands the other elements of the question. Will it be the tribes that lay in bed with the worst desecrators of the Salmon, the salmon commercial fishing and canning industry. Will it be the sport fishing public that will not agree to quit fishing to save the very fish they wish to catch. I do not believe there is one of the above that gives one whit about saving salmon or they would be pointing the finger at the worst culprit that decimated the salmon runs in the Columbia River. Lets let history tell us what needs to be done.

1829 The first salmon was harvested and shipped to market in the Northwest.

1866 The first salmon cannery opened on the Columbia River.

1876 Canneries were built on other rivers in Oregon and Washington.

1880 Most coastal rivers in Calif, Oregon and Washington had canneries on them.

1883 There were 39 canneries operating on the Columbia River.

1895 The cannery pack peaked at 635,000 cases of salmon on the Columbia River.

1897 The cannery pack in British Columbia exceeded 1 million cases.

1899 The cannery pack on the Puget Sound almost reached 1 million cases and the pack in Alaska exceeded 1 million cases..

1900 The fisheries moved to the Pacific Ocean.

1915 There were 500 troll fishing boats operating in the Pacific Ocean.

1919 There were 1500 troll fishing boats operating in the Pacific Ocean.

1920 There were 2000 troll fishing boats operating in the Pacific Ocean.

1920 This is very important that you remember this year. It was the year of the last major salmon run in the Columbia River.

During the peak dominant runs of sockeye salmon the Frazier River canneries packed between 25 and 35 million salmon out of a total catch of 35 to 50 million salmon. The difference 10 to 15 million salmon were left to rot. This same type of waste was practiced on the entire Pacific coast.

By 1920 commercial fishing had reduced the salmon population on the rivers of the Pacific Ocean to the point of extinction of some species, to the point of near extinction of other species and major concern for the remaining species.

By 1920 salmon habitat had been devastated by sawmills dumping sawdust into the rivers, logging clear cutting and using splash dams that ruined gravel beds, over grazing of cattle on both sides of the Cascades and irrigation dams, on tributary rivers, without adequate fish passage.

Then Government and Science added their ineptness to the picture through the inability of states to put aside their political differences, passing laws and not enforcing them to protect the salmon and rivers, science that thought building hatcheries could save the salmon decimated the salmon even more. Even today science cannot agree how to save the salmon. We kill hatchery fish and sell their roe for fish bait to save wild salmon but do not yet know if that wild salmon has been compromised and is actually interbred with a hatchery fish somewhere in its past.

1936 The second important date that you all should remember. The first dam was built on the Columbia River.

2000 The farmer is or has written a farm plan and is implementing it, the irrigator is or has written a water conservation plan and is implementing it, the logger is or has changed logging practices and road building practices, the dams have or will be retrofitted to be fish friendly. There are more government bureaucrats running around enforcing these rules than I think people that has to live with the rules.

You people in this audience and all the other audiences that have attended these so called meetings to save the salmon that are pointing your fingers at these people and say you have to give and give should first ask yourselves a very important question, "WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO GIVE"? You are all users, you eat food provided by the farmer, meat provided by the cattleman, lumber by the logger and electricity from the dams. These people are giving big time right now and have been for some time, implementing these plans are not cheap.

If you take 10 salmon presently in the Pacific Ocean that will run the Columbia in 2000, 6 of them will be caught by commercial ocean fisheries, of the 4 salmon left 3 of them will be killed by predators, Indian fishing and sport fishing. God save us and the salmon there is only one left to find his home river and spawn.

The Atlantic Salmon was at near extinction, they stopped all fishing for 5 years and the salmon runs rebounded astronomically.

Before we decide to remove 4 dams and if any of you think that is going to be the Magic Wand that will save the salmon then you need to go home and pray to God to come back and give you a new Brain, because if dam removal is the answer then every dam from the mouth to the headwaters of the Columbia and every tributary will have to be removed. History tells us that we need to restore habitat and in a small way that is now being done, but it is far from being complete. It also tells us

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that we need to quit fishing totally and let the salmon runs replenish themselves and then be very restrictive about how many fish will be caught in the future.

Lets start being truthful with each other and do what is right and throw greed and politics and power playing out the window.

Saving the Salmon will also save our future generations.

Thank You

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